

# Emergency Preparedness Guide



*Learn what to do before, during and after an emergency*

■

*Create an emergency plan for your family*


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*Prepare a disaster supply kit*

■

*Emergency resources*

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**Allen Bogard**  
*Sugar Land City Manager*

Dear Sugar Land Residents:

In the case of emergencies, the cliché — an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure — is right on the mark. Emergencies occur quickly and without notice. As residents of the Gulf Coast, we annually confront meteorological events, such as flash floods, tornadoes and hurricanes. Unfortunately, we must also prepare ourselves for other man-made disasters. Train derailments, chemical spills and, worse yet, terrorist attacks are all possibilities that must be considered.

Once an emergency occurs, the most important thing you can do to ensure the safety of your family is to remain calm and follow instructions from public safety professionals. This publication is intended as a resource to plan for unexpected emergencies.

Sincerely,

**Allen Bogard**



## Before an Emergency

**Create an Emergency Plan:** The next time disaster strikes, you may not have much time to act. Prepare now for a sudden emergency. Learn how to protect yourself and cope with disaster by planning ahead. This checklist will help you get started. Discuss these ideas with your family, then prepare an emergency plan. Post the plan where everyone will see it — on the refrigerator or bulletin board — and practice it regularly.

- ☐ Meet with household members to discuss the dangers of fire, severe weather, earthquakes and other emergencies. Explain how to respond to each.
- ☐ Find the safe spots in your home for each type of disaster.
- ☐ Discuss what to do about power outages and personal injuries.
- ☐ Draw a floor plan of your home. Mark two escape routes from each room.
- ☐ Show family members how and when to turn off the water, gas and electricity at main switches when necessary.
- ☐ Post emergency telephone numbers near telephones.
- ☐ Teach children how and when to call 911, police and fire.
- ☐ Instruct household members to turn on the radio for emergency information.
- ☐ Pick one out-of-state and one local friend or relative for family members to call if separated during a disaster (it is often easier to call out-of-state than within the affected area).
- ☐ Teach children your out-of-state contact's phone numbers.
- ☐ Pick two emergency meeting places:
  - 1) A place near your home in case of a fire.
  - 2) A place outside your neighborhood in case you cannot return home after a disaster.
- ☐ Take a basic first aid and CPR class.
- ☐ Keep family records in a water and fireproof container.

**Family Disaster Supply Kit:** Assemble supplies you might need in an evacuation. Store them in an easy-to-carry container, such as a backpack or duffel bag. Include:

- A three-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day). Store water in sealed, unbreakable containers. Identify the storage date and replace every six months.
- A supply of non-perishable packaged or canned food and a non-electric can opener.
- A change of clothing, rain gear and sturdy shoes.
- Blankets or sleeping bags.
- A first aid kit and prescription medications.
- An extra pair of glasses.
- A battery-powered radio, flashlight and plenty of extra batteries.
- Credit cards and cash.
- An extra set of car keys.
- A list of family physicians.
- A list of important family information; the style and serial number of medical devices, such as pacemakers.
- Special items for infants, elderly or disabled family members.
- Plan how to take care of pets.
- Install working smoke detectors on each level of your home, and replace the batteries semi-annually.



## During an Emergency

### Notification

Sugar Land currently utilizes several methods to alert the public regarding emergencies:

- The Public Information Emergency System enables the City to include alerts among electronic headlines at the bottom of television screens, as well as radio broadcasts.
- For life-threatening emergencies, all media, including radio and television, are notified to request that warning or instruction messages either be printed or broadcast for the public.
- For commuters traveling to and through Sugar Land, electronic text message signs can be activated along U.S. 59.
- City-owned electronic text message signs can be placed in any City location for motorists traveling Sugar Land streets.
- A siren and public address system can be used by City employees driving City streets to alert citizens of any pertinent information.

### If Disaster Strikes

- ☐ Remain calm and be patient.
- ☐ Follow the advice of local emergency officials.
- ☐ Listen to your radio or television for news and instructions.
- ☐ If the disaster occurs near you, check for injuries. Give first aid and get help for seriously injured people.
- ☐ If the disaster occurs near your home while you are there, check for damage using a flashlight.
- ☐ Do not light matches or candles or turn on electrical switches.
- ☐ Check for fires, fire hazards and other household hazards.
- ☐ Sniff for gas leaks, starting at the water heater. If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open windows and get everyone outside quickly.
- ☐ Shut off any other damaged utilities.
- ☐ Confine or secure your pets.
- ☐ Call your family contact—do not use the telephone again unless it is a life-threatening emergency.
- ☐ Check on your neighbors, especially those who are elderly or disabled.

**Evacuation:** If local authorities ask you to leave your home, they have a good reason to make this request, and you should heed the advice immediately. Listen to your radio or television and follow the instructions of local emergency officials and keep these simple tips in mind:

1. Wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants and sturdy shoes so you can be protected as much as possible.
2. Take your disaster supplies kit.
3. Lock your home.
4. Use travel routes specified by local authorities—don't use shortcuts because certain areas may be impassable or dangerous.
5. Stay away from downed power lines.
6. Take a battery-powered radio with you.





*If you're sure you have time:*

7. Shut off water, gas and electricity before leaving, if instructed to do so.
8. Post a note telling others when you left and where you are going.
9. Make arrangements for your pets. Take your pets with you; do not leave them behind. Because pets are not permitted in public shelters, follow your plan to go to a relative's or friend's home, or find a "pet-friendly" hotel.



## Food and Water in an Emergency

If disaster strikes, you might not have access to food, water and electricity for days, or even weeks. By taking some time now to store emergency food and water supplies, you can provide for your entire family. Having an ample supply of clean water is a top priority in an emergency. A normally active person needs to drink at least two quarts of water each day. Hot environments can double that amount. Children, nursing mothers and ill people will need even more. You will also need water for food preparation and hygiene. Store a total of at least one gallon per person, per day.\* You should store at least a two-week supply of water for each member of your family. If supplies run low, never ration water. Drink the amount you need today, and try to find more for tomorrow.

**How to Store Water:** Store your water in thoroughly washed plastic, glass, fiberglass or enamel-lined metal containers. Never use a container that has held toxic substances. Plastic containers, such as soft drink bottles, are best. You can also purchase food-grade plastic buckets or drums. Seal water containers tightly, label them and store in a cool, dark place. Rotate water every six months.

**Emergency Outdoor Water Sources:** If you need to find water outside your home, you can use these sources: rainwater; streams, rivers and other moving bodies of water; ponds and lakes; and natural springs. Be sure to purify the water before drinking it through boiling, disinfection or distillation. Avoid water with floating material, an odor or dark color. Use saltwater only if you distill it first. You should not drink floodwater.

**Hidden Water Sources in Your Home:** If a disaster catches you without a stored supply of clean water, you can use the water in your hot-water tank, pipes and ice cubes. As a last resort, you can use water in the reservoir tank of your toilet (not the bowl). Do you know the location of your incoming water valve? You'll need to shut it off to stop contaminated water from entering your home if you hear reports of broken water or sewage lines. To use the water in your pipes, let air into the plumbing by turning on the faucet in your house at the highest level. A small amount of water will trickle out. Then obtain water from the lowest faucet in the house. To use the water in your hot-water tank, be sure the electricity or gas is off, and open the drain at the bottom of the tank. Start the water flowing by turning off the water intake valve and turning on a hot-water faucet. Do not turn on the gas or electricity when the tank is empty.

**Boiling Water:** Boiling is the safest method of purifying water. Bring water to a rolling boil for 3-5 minutes, keeping in mind that some water will evaporate. Let the water cool before drinking. Boiled water will taste better if you put oxygen back into it by pouring the water back and forth between two clean containers. This will also improve the taste of stored water.

\* Based on state and federal information.



### **If the Electricity Goes Off ...**

FIRST, use perishable food and foods from the refrigerator.

THEN, use the foods from the freezer. To minimize the number of times you open the freezer door, post a list of freezer contents on it. In a well-filled, well-insulated freezer, foods will usually still have ice crystals in their centers (meaning foods are safe to eat) for at least three days.

FINALLY, begin to use non-perishable foods and staples.

**Short-Term Food Supplies:** Even though it is unlikely that an emergency would cut off your food supply for two weeks, you should prepare a supply that will last that long. The easiest way to develop a two-week stockpile is to increase the amount of basic foods you normally keep on your shelves.

**How to Cook If the Power Goes Out:** For emergency cooking, you can use a fireplace, or a charcoal grill or camp stove can be used outdoors. You can also heat food with candle warmers, chafing dishes and fondue pots. Canned food can be eaten right out of the can. If you heat it in the can, be sure to open the can and remove the label first.

**Shelf Life of Foods for Storage:** Here are some general guidelines for rotating common emergency foods.

**Use within six months:** Powdered milk (boxed); dried fruit (in metal container); dry, crisp crackers (in metal container); and potatoes.

**Use within one year:** Canned condensed meat and vegetable soups; canned fruits, fruit juices and vegetables; ready-to-eat cereals and uncooked instant cereals (in metal containers); peanut butter; jelly; hard candy and canned nuts; and vitamin C.

**May be stored indefinitely (in proper containers and conditions):** Wheat; vegetable oils; dried corn; baking powder; soybeans; instant coffee, tea and cocoa; salt; non-carbonated soft drinks; white rice; bouillon products; dry pasta; and powdered milk (in nitrogen-packed cans).



### **In-Place Sheltering**

During an accidental release of toxic chemicals or other emergencies where air quality is threatened, in-place sheltering will help keep you out of danger. In-place sheltering means to stay indoors — in homes, schools, businesses or public buildings. It includes additional precautions, such as turning off air conditioners and ventilation systems and closing all windows and doors.



Shelter-in-place can be used when there is little time to react to an incident, and it would be more dangerous to be outside trying to evacuate than it would be to stay where you are. It is the responsibility of local authorities to issue orders for in-place sheltering during chemical emergencies; these orders may be received directly from local authorities or through a media outlet.



## Sheltering At Home

- ☐ Quickly bring everyone inside, including your pets.
- ☐ Close and lock all doors to the outside.
- ☐ Close and lock all windows.
- ☐ Turn off all heating systems.
- ☐ Turn off all air conditioners, and switch the inlets to the "closed" positions.
- ☐ Close fireplace dampers and stove vents.
- ☐ Close as many interior doors as possible.
- ☐ Move to interior spaces if possible. Some gases are heavier than air.
- ☐ Seal any remaining cracks or openings with available materials, such as towels, blankets, plastic sheeting, etc.
- ☐ If necessary, cover your nose and mouth with a wet cloth.
- ☐ Tune to the Emergency Alert System station on your radio or television for further information and guidance.
- ☐ Wait for the all-clear signal from the emergency response authorities before you go outside again.



## Sheltering In a Car or Truck

- ☐ Stay in your car or truck.
- ☐ Close all windows, manual vents, air conditioning and ventilation systems.
- ☐ If possible, drive away from any visible gas or smoke clouds.
- ☐ Follow the orders of law enforcement or public safety personnel directing traffic.
- ☐ Tune to the Emergency Alert System station on your radio for further information and guidance.
- ☐ Stay in your car or truck and wait for the all-clear signal before you leave your car or open windows or vents.



## After an Emergency

If a federal disaster declaration is issued, federal recovery programs are initiated, state and federal recovery staffs are deployed and recovery facilities are established.

**Individual Assistance:** The FEMA Tele-registration System is activated so that disaster victims may register by phone for federal disaster assistance. Federal, state and local personnel conduct follow-up damage assessments. State and federal outreach programs for disaster victims are initiated. Individual assistance activities for citizens and businesses may continue for months. Individual assistance is provided directly to individuals, families and business owners in the form of:

- low-interest loans;
- cash grants;
- housing assistance;
- veterans benefits;
- tax refunds;
- excise tax relief;
- unemployment benefits;
- crisis counseling; and
- free legal counseling.

**Public Assistance:** Public assistance is provided to repair or rebuild public facilities affected by a disaster, including buildings, state or local roads and bridges, water supply and sewage treatment, flood control systems, airports and publicly-owned electric utilities. Public assistance is also available to repair or rebuild schools and public recreation facilities. While these grants are aimed at governments and organizations, their final goal is to help a community and all its citizens recover from devastating natural disasters.

### Other Assistance

**Small Business Administration (SBA) Disaster Declarations:** If the emergency situation does not meet the criteria for a presidential disaster declaration, assistance in the form of loans may be available from the SBA. Limited assistance may also be available from several state programs.

**Agricultural Disaster Declarations:** The Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to make agricultural disaster declarations for weather-related crop losses. When such declarations are made, farmers and ranchers become eligible for an emergency loan program.





# Fast Fridge Facts

The following fast facts are presented in a checklist format. Clip this information, post it on your refrigerator or family bulletin board and refer to it in the event of severe weather.



## General:

- A weather WATCH means watch the sky for possible severe weather.
- A weather WARNING means some type of severe weather has been sighted or identified on radar.
- Prepare a Family Emergency Kit and keep it handy.



## Tornados:

Keep in mind that an approaching cloud of debris can mark the location of a tornado even if a funnel is not visible. Before a tornado hits, the wind may die down, and the air may become very still. Because tornadoes generally occur near the trailing edge of a thunderstorm, it is not uncommon to see clear, sunny skies behind a tornado.

- ☐ "Go low, and get low" means go to the lowest level of the structure you're in, crouch in a low position and cover your head to protect it.
- ☐ In your home, take cover in the center part of the house on the lowest floor in a small room, such as a closet or bathroom.
- ☐ If you live in a mobile home, evacuate the structure even if it has a tie-down system. If there is no designated shelter in the mobile home park, take cover on low, protected ground.
- ☐ If you're caught in your car, leave it and seek shelter in a nearby substantial building (if one is available) or lie flat in a close ditch or ravine. Never try to outrun a tornado in your car.



## Lightning Storms:

- ☐ If you see lightning, watch closely to determine if the storm is approaching.
- ☐ If you can hear thunder or see a bolt to the ground, you are within 10 to 15 miles of the storm. This is a high danger zone, and you should have a safe location in mind and be ready to move to it.
- ☐ Avoid equipment or phones because lightning can follow the wires.
- ☐ Turn off air conditioners. Power surges from lightning can overload the compressors.
- ☐ Television sets are particularly dangerous at this time. Avoid the bathtub, water faucets and sinks because metal pipes can transmit electricity.
- ☐ If you're outdoors, observe the following safety rules:
  1. Try to get into a building or a vehicle.
  2. If no structure is available, get to an open space and squat as low to the ground as possible.
  3. If you're in an area with trees, find an area protected by low clumps of trees. Never stand underneath a single large tree in the open.
  4. Crouch with your hands on your knees.
  5. Stay away from tall structures, such as towers, trees, fences, phone lines or power lines.
  6. Stay away from natural lightning rods, such as golf clubs, tractors, fishing rods, bicycles, metal bats or camping equipment.
  7. Avoid rivers, lakes or other bodies of water.
  8. If you feel your hair stand on end (an indication that lightning is about to strike), bend forward, putting your hands on your knees. Don't lie flat on the ground.

*(Continued on back)*



If you're in your car during a lightning storm, pull onto the shoulder of the road away from any trees that could fall on the vehicle. Stay in the car, and turn on the emergency flashers until the heavy rains subside. The interior of a car, truck or bus is relatively safe from lightning as long as you don't touch any metal on the inside of your vehicle.

Also remember that sport fields are at a high risk for lightning strikes, so delay the game when a storm moves in.



### **Flooding:**

As little as six inches of fast-moving water can knock you off your feet, and a small car can float in just one foot of water. Once a car is drowned out, you can be trapped inside if your electric windows and door locks short out when water reaches them.

- ☐ Never drive into rising water even if you think you know how deep it is. And never drive around a barrier — it's there to protect you. If your car stalls in rapidly rising water, abandon it immediately and move to higher ground.
- ☐ If you are home when a flash flood threatens, move your important papers, photos and other non-replaceable mementos to the highest point in the house.
- ☐ Turn off the power to the house and be prepared to ride out the storm with the items in your Family Emergency Kit.
- ☐ Once the floodwaters have receded, contact professionals to help you salvage furniture, carpet and other household items. Seek out ways to flood-proof your home if you live in a flood plain, and plan ahead by buying flood insurance.



### **Hurricanes**

- ☐ Before the hurricane season: 1) learn safe routes inland; 2) check emergency equipment, such as flash lights, battery-powered radios, etc.; 3) ensure that enough non-perishable food and water supplies are on hand; 4) clear loose and clogged rain gutters; and 5) review your insurance policy.
- ☐ During a storm, frequently listen to radio, television or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration weather radio for official bulletins.
- ☐ Prepare to cover all windows and door openings with shutters or other shielding materials.
- ☐ Prepare to bring inside lawn furniture and other loose, lightweight objects, such as garbage cans, garden tools, etc.
- ☐ Leave immediately if told to do so, and if evacuating, leave early.
- ☐ Put food and water out for a pet if you cannot take it with you.



### **More Information:**

[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) (American Red Cross)

[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) (Federal Emergency Management Administration)

[www.spc.noaa.gov](http://www.spc.noaa.gov) (NOM Storm Prediction Center)



## Emergency Resources

### Emergency

911

### Sugar Land Emergency Hotline

Phone: (281) 494-HELP (4357)

### Sugar Land Fire Department

Phone: (281) 491-0852

### Sugar Land Police Department

Phone: (281) 275-2500

### Sugar Land Emergency Management

Phone: (281) 275-2860

### Fort Bend County Emergency Management

Phone: (281) 342-6185

Web Site: [www.co.fort-bend.tx.us/County\\_Services/OEM/default.htm](http://www.co.fort-bend.tx.us/County_Services/OEM/default.htm)

### Houston Red Cross

Phone: (713) 526-8300

Web Site: [www.houstonredcross.org/](http://www.houstonredcross.org/)

### Texas Department of Health

Phone: 1 (888) 963-7111 or 1 (512) 458-7111

Web Site: [www.tdh.state.tx.us/default.htm](http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/default.htm)

### Centers for Disease Control:

Phone: 1 (404) 639-3534 or 1 (800) 311-3435

Web Site: [www.cdc.gov/](http://www.cdc.gov/)

### U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Phone: 1 (877) 696-6775

Web Site: [www.os.dhhs.gov/](http://www.os.dhhs.gov/)

### Federal Emergency Management Agency

Phone: (202) 646-4600

Web Site: [www.fema.gov/](http://www.fema.gov/)



## Stay Tuned for Updates

Sugar Land relies on several local radio and television stations to disseminate important information quickly during emergency situations. In case of an emergency, you will be contacted via the following local media stations:

### Radio

KTRH-AM 740

KPRC-AM 950

KIKK-FM 96

KILT-FM 100.3

KODA-FM 99.1

KRBE-FM 104.1

### Television

KHOU-TV Channel 11 (CBS)

KPRC-TV Channel 2 (NBC)

KRIV-TV Channel 26 (Fox)

KTMD-TV Channel 48 (Spanish)

KTRK-TV Channel 13 (ABC)

KHWB-TV Channel 39

KXLN-TV Channel 45 (Spanish)

*Some of the information in this brochure was obtained from The Federal Emergency Management Agency's Community and Family Preparedness Program and the American Red Cross Community Disaster Education Program. Other preparedness materials are available by calling FEMA at 1-800-480-2520 or writing: FEMA, P.O. Box 2012, Jessup, MD 20794-2012.*

*Publications are also available on the World Wide Web at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) and [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).*

*Ask for: Are You Ready?, Your Family Disaster Supplies Kit and Food & Water in an Emergency.*

**Sugar Land City Council has  
established the following goals:**

- A well planned community
- Safest city in the area
- Strong local economy
- Responsible city government
- Mobility for people



**Sugar Land...*there is no equal***

**City of Sugar Land**

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